Julie E. Lang, MD, FACS, Breast Surgical Oncology

Julie E. Lang, MD, FACS, who specializes in breast cancer surgery and research, joined USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center and USC Norris Cancer Hospital, in 2012 as an associate professor of surgery. Dr. Lang’s laboratory studies molecular profiling of circulating tumor cells in breast cancer, inflammatory breast cancer and radiation induced-sarcoma. At USC Norris, Dr. Lang is also involved with clinical trials and translational studies focused on finding better treatments for breast cancer patients via a multidisciplinary and personalized approach.

Dr. Lang is an expert in advanced breast surgical techniques such as nipple sparing mastectomy, skin sparing mastectomy, oncoplastic surgery, and sentinel node biopsy. Her unique perspective as a surgeon and scientist provides patients with advanced or complex breast cancer requiring multidisciplinary care or reconstruction with the very best care.

Research

Dr. Lang studies the molecular profiling of circulating tumor cells in breast cancer. She has developed a novel strategy to isolate rare cancer cells in the bloodstream that are shed by a primary tumor. After capturing these cells from breast cancer patient’s peripheral blood via a simple blood draw, Dr. Lang can perform sophisticated molecular biology studies to characterize the biology of these cells in a detailed fashion. Dr. Lang’s study of profiling circulating tumor cells, can lead to personalized cancer care by studying the very cells that have the potential to spread.

Dr. Lang has established a method that allows for isolation of pure populations of circulating tumor cells from all types of breast cancers. Her laboratory has demonstrated in proof of principle data that we can perform detailed studies such as microarrays or Next Generation Sequencing of these cells to get a better understanding of their biology.

Background

- Medical degree, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- Surgery residency and postdoctoral research fellowship in breast cancer research, University of California, San Francisco
- Breast surgical oncology fellowship, University of Texas, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center
- Five-year role as Director, Breast Surgical Oncology, University of Arizona Cancer Center

How to Refer

To make a referral please call (323) 865-3918.
Multidisciplinary Breast Cancer Center

The USC Harold E. and Henrietta C. Lee Breast Center at USC Norris Cancer Hospital, part of Keck Medical Center of USC, delivers a full spectrum of services by a team of dedicated breast cancer experts, who also engage in pioneering cancer-fighting research. We provide the most advanced diagnostic and treatment technologies, and use state-of-the-art imaging equipment to precisely stage cancer and customize therapy.

Our multidisciplinary approach allows patients to see all appropriate specialists at one location to create an individualized treatment plan. The entire team of specialists conducts regular Tumor Boards to evaluate every patient’s case and recommend a comprehensive and tailored treatment plan.

Additionally, our physicians value continuity of care with referring physicians in order to build a strong partnership and to keep them informed of their patients’ progress. Specialists in the Breast Center have national leadership roles, such as serving as presidents of the American Cancer Society, American Society of Breast Cancer, Society for Integrative Oncology and editor-in-chief of CURE Magazine.

One of only a few facilities in Southern California built exclusively for cancer research and patient care, USC Norris Cancer Hospital is affiliated with the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center, one of the original eight comprehensive cancer centers designated by the National Cancer Institute. It has maintained its distinguished image by conducting ongoing research, and continues to build bridges between clinical care and research. Early discoveries in breast cancer were made here decades ago and the cancer center and hospital have become world leaders in breast cancer research.

Advanced Procedures

Onco-plastic Surgery – Combining cancer surgery (lumpectomy) with plastic and reconstructive surgery for optimal clinical outcomes and cosmetic results.

Lymphedema Risk Reduction - Studies show that physical therapy after axillary dissection reduces rates of lymphedema.

Coordinated Multidisciplinary Care - Our team of specialists will ensure that patient work-up and treatment are timely and coordinated in order to optimize individualized care.

Sentinel Lymph Node Biopsy - Many patients with breast cancer benefit from removing just a few lymph nodes rather than all of the lymph nodes in the area.

Skin Sparing and Nipple Sparing Mastectomies - Some patients benefit from advanced mastectomy techniques to achieve excellent oncologic and aesthetic outcomes. Expert breast surgeons, together with expert plastic surgeons, provide superior outcomes for patients.

State of the Art Breast Center for Imaging - Digital mammography, ultrasound, MRI and 3D mammogram are read by our dedicated breast imaging team.

Clinical Trials

Newer Targeted Drugs Given Prior to Surgery (Neoadjuvant Therapy) – Several neoadjuvant trials of biological therapies coupled with biopsies and MRI imaging to monitor results accelerate the discovery of better therapies.

PARP Inhibitors – A new class of drug for specific types of breast cancer that has generated much interest and is being evaluated for approval by the FDA.

Green Tea and Soy – Based on observational studies, our center is engaged in researching these preventive approaches to examine effects on normal breast tissue.

Circulating Tumor Cells - Researchers at USC are investigating if the biology of circulating tumor cells in the blood of breast cancer patients may provide clues leading to improved treatment options.

Molecular Profiling of Tumors - several investigators are searching for biomarkers predictive of response to treatment.

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